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STRESS-FREE EFFECTIVENESS

Is this an Oxymoron?

MBA Association of Ireland
27th May 2010

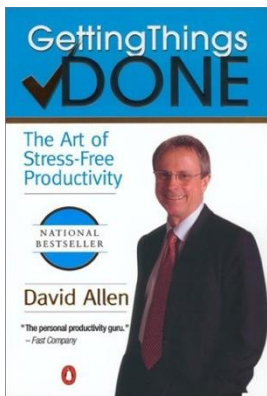
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Is it possible to be effective and stress free in
Management roles?



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'GETTING THINGS DONE®' (GTD®)



- Getting Things Done, The Art of Stress-free productivity, David Allen, 2001
- www.davidco.com

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PRESENTATION FORMAT



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STRESS-FREE EFFECTIVENESS

- Focus on the most important thing at any given moment
- Issues
 - Interference
 - Do you know everything you're not doing?



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CONTEXT – IN THE ZONE

- loads done
- everything just fell into place
- on-time
- every minute maximised
- you felt in total control.



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CONTEXT – NOT IN THE ZONE

- nothing went right
- nothing properly finished
- continually interrupted
- going from one issue to the next
- exhausted
- drained
- worked late



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WHAT IS TYPICAL?



OR



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★ GTD practices put you in the zone

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EXERCISE 1:
MIND SWEEP

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WHAT IS GTD?


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WHAT IS GTD?

 Your head is clear and focused at all times.

 Everything is achieved with ease and calm.

 The greatest possible number of things get done with the least amount of effort.

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“In Control” = Relaxed, focused and inspired.

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 GTD CONCEPT: FOCUS

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"Use your mind to think about things, not to
keep thinking of them" - David Allen

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Give attention to what has your attention.

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You can't focus effectively on more than one thing at a time.

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 GTD CONCEPT: STRESS-FREE

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DEMONSTRATION

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Uncontrolled “thinking” creates immediate stress.

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Lack of focus = internal stress =
ineffectiveness

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DEMONSTRATION - STOP

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HOW DO YOU “DO” GTD?

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“DOING” GTD:

1. Write everything down. 
2. Decide what you need to finish. 
3. Decide what is the very next physical action on each of the things you need to finish. 
4. Maintain lists for these decisions and keep them up to date. 

= Control and Perspective

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Doing GTD is about externalising your commitments, thus freeing your mind to focus.

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“Use bookmarks” - put place holders for your decisions into trusted places where you know you will see them again.

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EXERCISE 2: USING LISTS

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EXERCISE 3: DECIDING WHAT TO DO

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THE VALUE OF USING LISTS

	Using your Mind Only	Using your "extended mind"
Preparation / Setup Time	Nil	10 minutes
Thinking time per decision	2 minutes	10 seconds
Deciding what to do (4-5 times a hour / 8 hours per day) (Less preparation / setup time)	80 Minutes	7 minutes (10 minutes)
Total time spent "deciding what do"	80 Minutes	17 minutes
Next savings PER DAY		63 minutes

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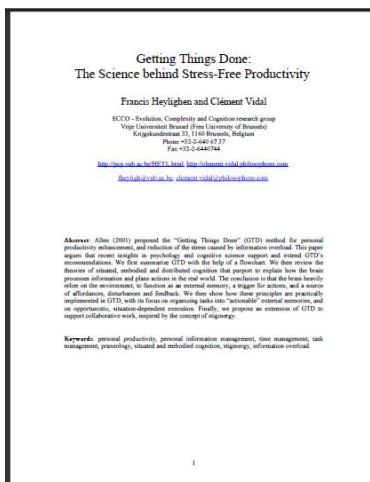
THE RESEARCH

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THE RESEARCH

- Heylighen and Vidal
- Free University of Brussels
- <http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/Papers/GTD-cognition.pdf>



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GTD minimizes the burden on memory and reasoning by systematically exploiting external memories

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Application of GTD promotes the flow state:

- a clear sense of purpose
- regular feedback as to-dos are “ticked off” one by one
- on-going, unrestrained advance towards goal

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...a sense of control, focus, and well-being

verses

confusion, anxiety and procrastination.

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Getting Things Done: The Science behind
Stress-Free Productivity

Heylighen and Vidal

<http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/Papers/GTD-cognition.pdf>

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GTD CONCEPT: WORKFLOW

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Making Decisions on everything:

new ideas, E-mail, voicemails, notes, letters,
reports, agenda, books, journals,
magazines, bits and pieces, etc, etc

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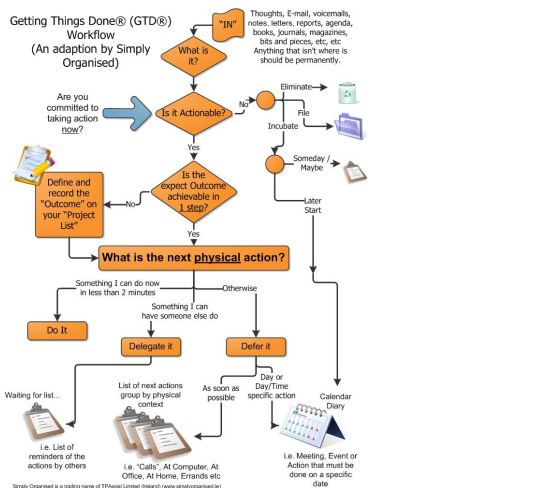


Make decisions on things when they show up
and not when they blow up.

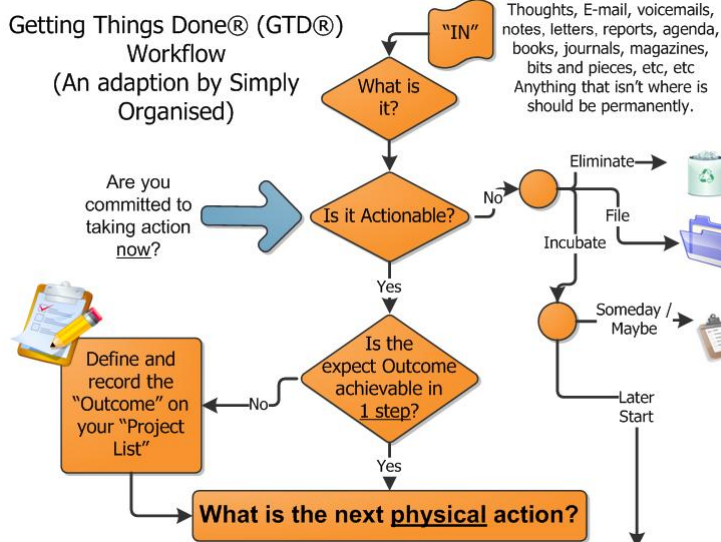
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GTD WORKFLOW MODEL



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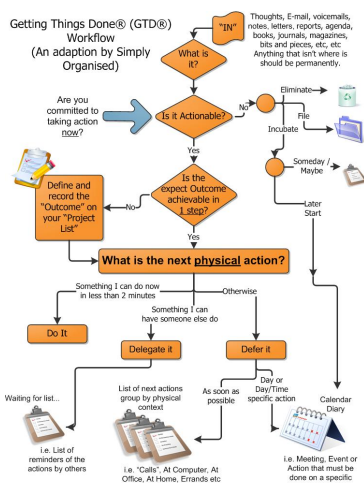


DEMONSTRATION

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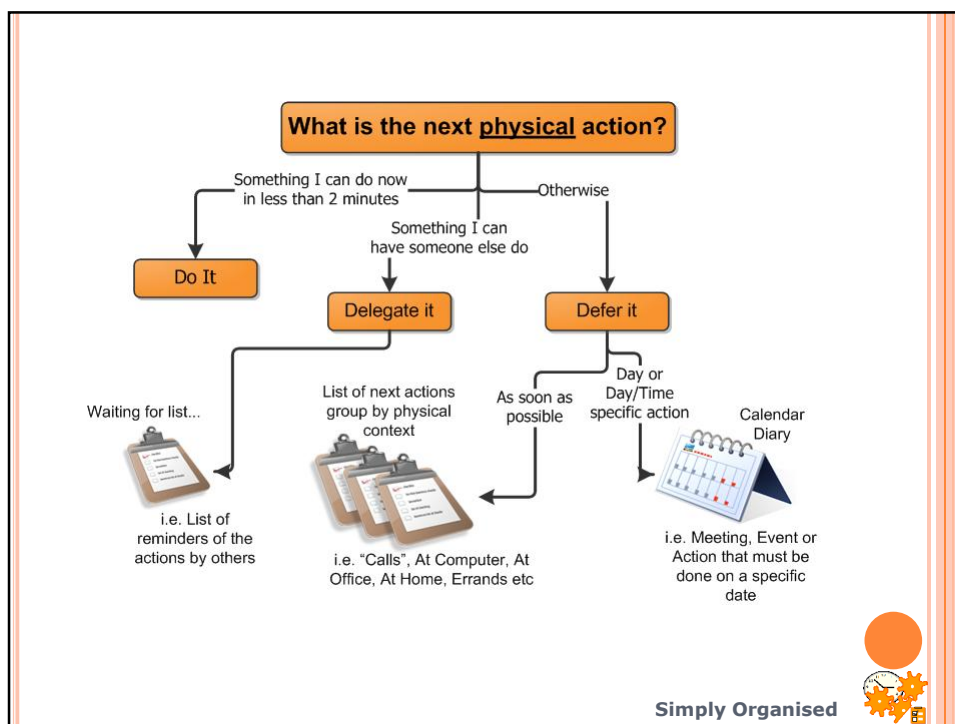


GTD WORKFLOW MODEL



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NEXT ACTIONS LISTS?

- "90+ % of to-do lists I've seen are incomplete inventories of still-unclear things." - David Allen
- Next action lists are "finished" thinking.

FINISHED THINKING

- "Dentist" → "Have teeth checked and cleaned"
 - Next Action: "Ask my wife for phone number of Dentist."

- "Staff Performance Reviews" → "Complete the performance review process for my staff"
 - Next Action: "Ask Helen in HR for last year's performance review forms"

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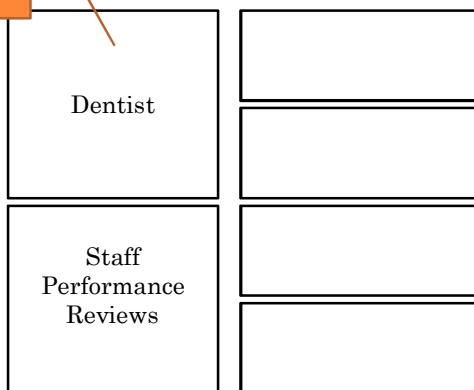
EXERCISE 4: WORKFLOW

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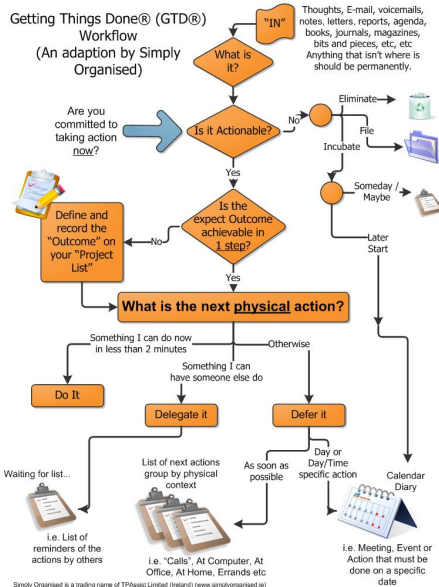


CAPTURING DECISIONS

Mind sweep item

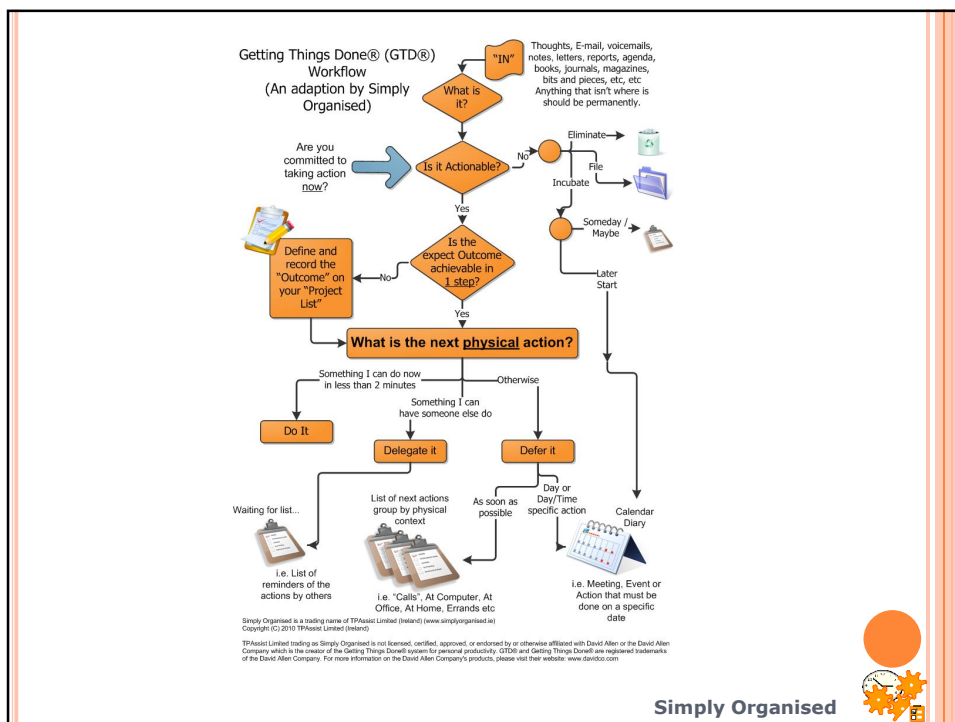
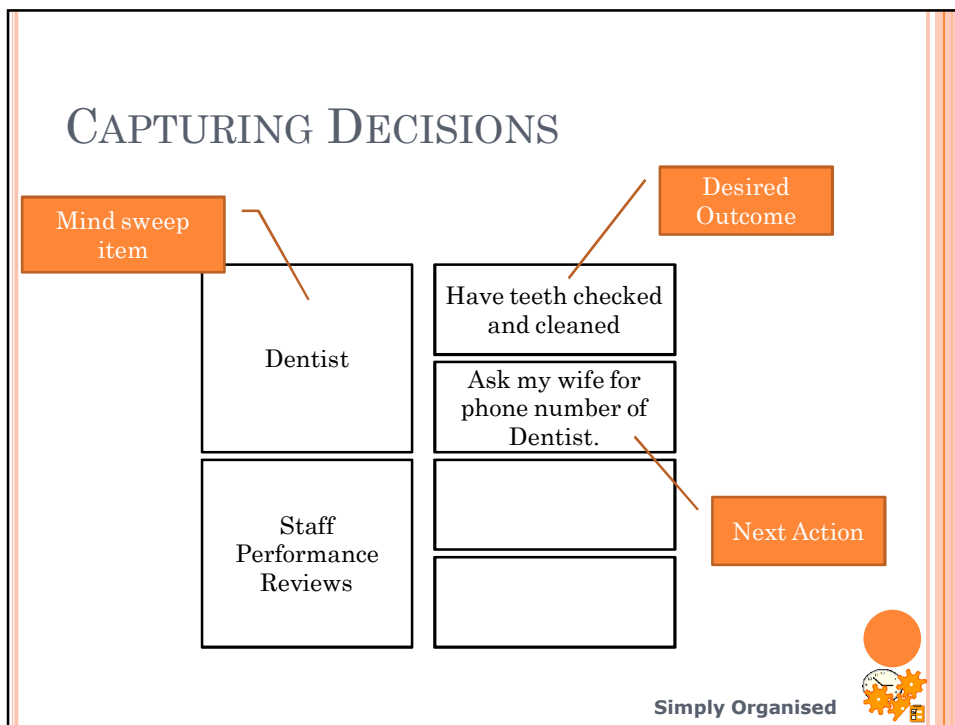


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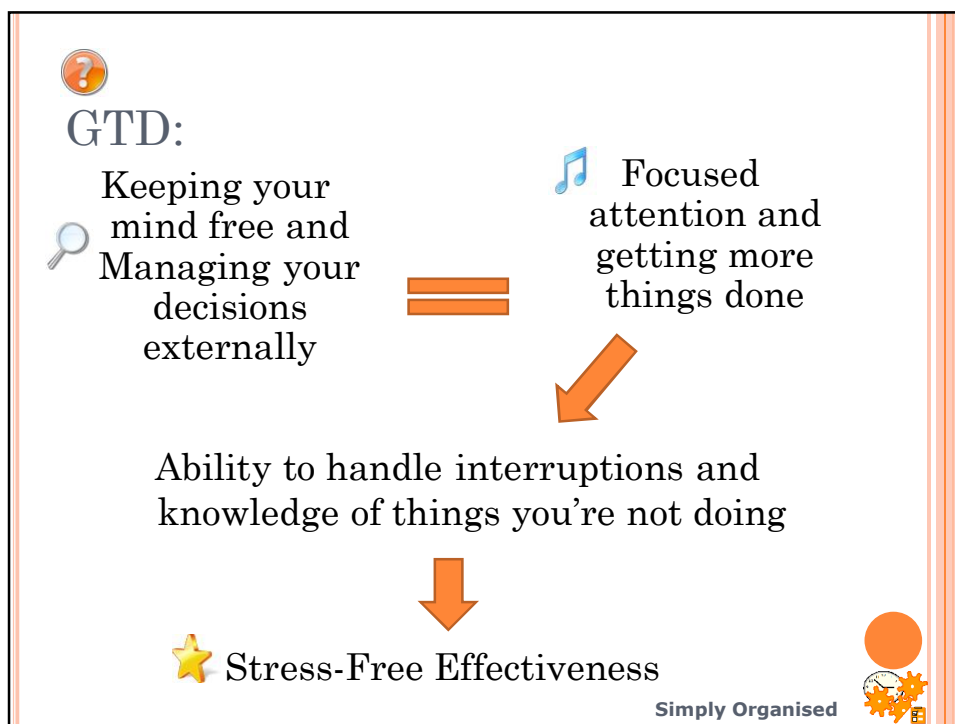
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FURTHER INFORMATION

- Contact Me: Brad Allen
 - Brad@simplyorganised.ie
- Join the GTD Ireland Networking Club
 - www.gtdireland.com
- Contact David Allen company
 - www.davidco.com

